

Washington DC - On December 15, Rep Michael Honda published the following op-ed in [Oakland Tribune](#) on the Supreme Court's decision regarding gay marriage.

### **Supreme Court can relegate discrimination to history's ash bin**

By Rep. Michael Honda

This Sept. 6, 2011 file photo shows opponents of gay marriage outside a courthouse in San Francisco. This month the U.S. Supreme Court announced it would hear *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, the case brought by the legal team of Ted Olson and David Boies, which challenges the constitutionality of Proposition 8. Passed in 2008, this ballot initiative enshrined discrimination in California's state constitution and only recognizes marriages between one man and one woman.

In addition to *Perry*, the court also has agreed to hear a challenge to section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). *United States v. Windsor* could potentially strike down the "straight-people-only" federal definition of marriage, and fully recognize married couples of all sexual orientations in the eyes of the law.

In just a few short months' time, those nine justices may deliver one of the most consequential verdicts we've seen in ages. The puzzling maze of possibilities and the legal ramifications of the myriad opinions the justices could write is best left to legal scholars and Supreme Court aficionados. But as a Northern Californian, an elected official blessed to represent his neighbors and community in Congress, and a citizen who has seen this country and our culture grow through the decades, I can tell you Californians and people everywhere are ready for the new world era.

The institution of marriage is a revered and valued custom. It always has been and always will be, and we are ready to throw open the doors and welcome our gay and lesbian friends who wish to join this esteemed tradition. Regardless of the court's decision, the quickly changing dynamics of public opinion on the matter will dictate the marriage equality movement's future.

In this regard, we're experiencing watershed moments that give us great reason for optimism. In California, where Prop. 8 passed just four years ago, support for marriage equality now polls as high as 59 percent in the state.

And 2012 marked unprecedented success at the ballot box with pro-equality outcomes in Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, and Washington. Better yet, even more states, such as Rhode Island and Oregon, appear primed and ready to add to the ranks of marriage equality states. Complete silence from the standard bearers in the Republican Party after the Supreme

Court's announcement speaks volumes, and proves just how awkward the situation has become for a party touting freedom and federalism. Perhaps it's only made it clearer now that nationwide polling now finds that support for marriage for gay couples consistently breaks the 50 percent barrier.

LGBT Americans are out of the closet and breaking through barriers now more than ever. They're our favorite characters on television, our most revered lawmakers in Washington, and our brave friends and family members who live openly and honestly every single day, serving our country in the military, as parents, as policymakers and in myriad other ways. Their visibility has made all the difference and changed the hearts and minds of so many Americans.

My message to allies around the country is this: It's time to get to work. The next few years will be among the most critical for marriage equality, regardless of the Supreme Court's decisions, and we cannot be a movement that wallows in successes or failures and rests on its laurels.

Fruitful, dynamic conversations about this issue are happening in communities and states across the country, and we have unique perspectives to share. By sharing our sagas, remembering the pain of Prop. 8 and DOMA, and relaying our journeys to acceptance, we can change public opinion. Sharing these deeply personal stories will contribute to finally relegating this chapter of American history to the past, where it belongs.